

Plant a Tree Today, Benefit Tomorrow

The best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago. The second best time is now

An old Chinese proverb says "One generation plants a tree; the next sits in its shade." However, if our urban forests are not tended to with care, future generations may not have the benefit of a green oasis in our city. Planting and maintaining trees is vital to preserving the urban forests in Milpitas as well as in communities around the world.

Every tree planted today offers benefits to our environment for years to come. Improvements to air quality, climate moderation, and water conservation are important examples of the advantages that a strong urban forest can provide.

Improvement of air quality is obtained through the filtering process of the leaves.

- Filtering removes dust and other particulates from the air
- Leaves absorb air pollutants such as carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, and sulfur dioxide
- Transpiration renews the air supply by producing oxygen

Climate control is obtained by moderating the effects of sun, wind, and rain.

- Glare and reflection control
- Wind break, deflection, and filtration
- Protection from downward fall of rain, sleet, and hail
- Cost reduction due to shade and shelter, reducing yearly heating and cooling cost.

Water conservation occurs due to the interception of water by trees.

- Reduction of storm run-off, erosion, and the possibility of flooding
- Improvement of water quality through purification by slowing and filtering rain water

We think that trees should be planted in a rural setting, overlooking the fact that more than 80% of the population live in our cities, where additional trees can provide the greatest benefit. As each of our communities grow, we need to consider what contributions we can make to improve the urbanized environment we live in by both protecting our existing trees and planting new trees in suitable planting sites. It is never too late to invest in the future of our urban landscape, and harvest the environmental rewards that trees provide.

Remember, the second best time to plant a tree is today.

The City of Milpitas tree crew is planting city street trees in tree planting easements in the Parktown residential neighborhood in the month of December. For more information on tree planting, the environmental benefits of trees, or other tree care information, visit www.ci.milpitas.ca.gov and search Street Tree Program.

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